

Living the Mission Episode 4: The Full Experience with Blake Yoho and Carolina Kane

Delaney [00:00:05] Welcome to Living the Mission with the Center for Service and Social Action. I'm Delaney Burns.

Caroline [00:00:09] And I'm Caroline Maltese Pull up your Adirondack chair.

Delaney [00:00:13] Or grab your favorite snack from The Tween.

Caroline [00:00:14] And come chat with us and some friends about experiences that have shaped our values to promote social change.

Both [00:00:19] And Live the mission..

Caroline [00:00:24] Hey, Delaney.

Delaney [00:00:25] Hi, Caroline.

Caroline [00:00:26] What's going on?

Delaney [00:00:27] Well, things are good, but this week has been a little overwhelming in terms of trying to figure things out for the future. And just looking into what's going to happen, where I want to be. How I can find and follow the path that God has for me. But what I know is that things are working in small ways. And I can see them. And I'm excited.

Caroline [00:00:51] Yay.

Delaney [00:00:52] It feels good. Yes.

Caroline [00:00:53] Small steps.

Delaney [00:00:54] Yeah. What's up with you?

Caroline [00:00:56] This week was a lot, but I'm excited for the weekend. Excited to have a little bit of a break, you know, get my weekly Barrio in.

Delaney [00:01:03] Yep. Got to love that weekly Barrio!

Caroline [00:01:04] We have been there every weekend since I've gotten to school. But yeah, I was feeling pretty exhausted, but, you know, feeling refreshed with a new day today. And we're ready to kick off the weekend here.

Delaney [00:01:18] Can't wait.

Caroline [00:01:18] Yes. So talking about our theme for today, what are we talking about?

Delaney [00:01:22] Collaboration. So let's talk a little bit about what collaboration is. So according to the social change model of leadership, it has to do with working with one another for a common effort. It's the cornerstone of group leadership because it empowers self and others

through trust. And we have some special guests on here today that are super close to see CSSA and this whole podcasts situation that we've got going on. Who are they?

Delaney [00:01:48] Yeah. So in the spirit of collaboration, we decided to have two guests today. Carolina Kane and Blake Yoho were excited to chat with them. We thought it would be interesting since they do a lot of collaborating in the Center for Service and Social Action office and they both have careers that rely a lot upon collaborating. So they just are giving us some insights and some wisdom about how to collaborate with one another, how we need each other, how we need that connectedness. And I think that's something that we're seeing in a lot of this, that we want to be connected to each other and we want to find ways to rely on each other and find hope from one another.

Caroline [00:02:27] Awesome. Let's go grab them.

Delaney [00:02:29] All right. Let's get started.

Delaney [00:02:36] All right. Carolina, Blake, we're gonna get started. So if we can just have both of you just give a brief explanation of who you are, a little background, and any fun facts that you'd like to share about yourselves. Carolina, if you want to kick us out.

Carolina [00:02:51] Alright! Good to be here. Thanks for asking us to be on! So I am Carolina Kane. I am in the Center for Service and Social Action and I'm our marketing specialist. I've been at John Carroll for a little over two years. I went to the Cleveland Institute of Art for my undergrad and I have a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Photography, but I was trained in drawing and painting. So it's kind of like a fun fact. I do all the graphic design do lots of fun art things. In my free time. I do galleries and fine art work and, and all that good stuff. Fun fact. I also really like airplanes and I like working on airplanes on the weekend,.

Caroline [00:03:37] Like as a like an attendant?

Carolina [00:03:40] Well I used to be a front desk office worker at an airport for five years. Not, I'm not an attendant, but I like working on it. Like doing some mechanics on it. So it's fun. I'm learning we're working on a big DC-3, which is a 1942 airplane, so it's pretty cool.

Caroline [00:04:00] I did not know a lot about you.

Carolina [00:04:04] So yeah, I live with some of my roommates today graduated from CIA with I traveled to Ireland for art. I'm just like throwing some fun facts here. Yeah. I want to travel the world for my artwork and combine art and social justice together. So that's kind of like my my life mission. So that's me overall.

Caroline [00:04:30] Blake.

Blake [00:04:31] Yeah. So I'm Blake Yoho. I am the graduate student in CSSA

Caroline [00:04:36] You hoo!

Blake [00:04:36] You hoo! I got that a lot. I got Yahoo a lot. But yeah. So I'm a grad student in CSSA. I am originally from Cleveland. I went to St. Ignatius High School and had been in Jesuit

schools ever since. Today's, or, this year. It actually is the year where being in a Jesuit school. I've been there longer than non-Jesuit schools, which was kind of weird, thinking about. But I graduated from Boston College with a degree in Management and Leadership. I originally wanted to be in the business world, but then I finally like listened to what other people have been telling me my whole life. And God finally kicked me and said, OK, go be an English teacher. So now I'm starting to be a high school English teacher and working towards my master's degree. I love cooking. I love sharing food with people, especially cooking for my friends and family. When I'm not being lazy or making excuses and my joints aren't sore, I like to run and bike. And Cleveland has really shown, especially in the fall, how beautiful it is. Amidst all this pandemic. And yeah, I'm not sure what the next 10 years has in store for me, but maybe high school English teacher. Hopefully if I can get my license. But we'll see.

Caroline [00:05:54] OK Blake, you like to cook. I assume that means maybe you like to eat some food. I'm assuming again making another connection that you've gone to The Tween before. Can you tell us your favorite snack from The Tween?

Blake [00:06:06] I mean, is there anything else but chicken tendies?

Delaney [00:06:09] We've been waiting!!!

Caroline [00:06:09] We've been waiting for someone to say it!

Delaney [00:06:13] We do love a tender basket.

Caroline [00:06:17] Carolina?

Carolina [00:06:18] I haven't had the privilege, but I heard there's great things about the tender basket?

Delaney [00:06:24] We recommend it. This podcast is not sponsored by the tender basket.

Caroline [00:06:30] But if The Tween would like to hit us up, we will gladly take a sponsorship.

Delaney [00:06:35] So today we are going to be talking and discussing collaboration. So we know that both of you work in CSSA together, but also have had some experiences collaborating in your own lives. So we wanted to just start. We wanted to hear a little bit. How would you define collaboration?

Blake [00:06:54] I think collaboration is a little different than teamwork. A lot of times, at least growing up, I always thought they were the same thing. But like looking at movements like right now the NBA pushing everyone on voter awareness or like a bunch of protests for Black Lives Matter or police brutality. And all these sorts of things are involving more than teamwork. I think collaboration takes a lot of people taking active leadership roles. You're putting in more than just time and effort. You're putting in a lot of emotion, passion. You don't just like show up to work every day and work on something. It's taking a lot more from you.

Delaney [00:07:33] Kind of next step from teamwork, collaborating.

Caroline [00:07:38] So then, you know, we do a lot of collaboration and college, it is maybe like the peak of people's collaborating times. So when when we're working in these groups and we're collaborating, if it's not going well or if we're not trusting others in the group, how do you think that we are able to then manage that situation and how are we able to still try to foster that community of collaboration?

Carolina [00:08:03] So I think I don't know if it's not about like not trusting people, but I think it's recognizing that everyone brings different strengths to the team, not to use teamwork again. But I mean, you have to work in a team to build collaboration. You know, teams can collaborate, people can collaborate, offices can collaborate. But it's really, I think, understanding that everyone has these different strengths. And so if something isn't going well in a group, perhaps, you know, maybe that's not their best role. You know, maybe it's it's trying to see things from someone else's perspective and really trying to to consider is is this their strength? Is this their best, their best quality, their best, you know, thing that they can do to help us collaborate. And I think it's really about finding the roles. Finding the role that you fit into, finding the role that other people fit into. And that's what collaboration is. You know, it's we each have our own different strengths. So how can we work together and how can we make this, that work towards this this final effort, toward this final cause where we're all kind of equal in that and bring our best selves to the table?

Blake [00:09:07] Yeah, I love that you said equal. I think that's really important in recognizing that everyone's an equal member of the collaboration, like you said it perfectly.

Delaney [00:09:16] I think one thing that I struggle with in collaborating is sometimes thinking, you know, I have these strengths and other people have those strengths, too, and I think that balance is important, but also recognizing that I can't do it on my own. I think that sometimes I want to be able to, but recognizing that other people are also able to bring something to the table and working with that and seeing that through even when it's not apparent. And so, I am just looking and wondering what you think is the best route to take if we feel like we can do it on our own or if we don't need those connections or that doesn't happen at first. What would you say is a piece of advice for when I or someone else would be discouraged with that?

Blake [00:10:00] I think probably the first thing you have to ask is like, why aren't you trusting other people? Or like, why do you feel that you're better at something or more capable of doing something than someone else? And being honest with yourself, I think we go into things a lot of times with ego and wanting to perform a certain way or achieve and compare ourselves against other people. And that can hinder us from really having an effective collaboration. We start doubting other people's abilities and their own talents and see ourselves in kind of a greater light than what we might actually be. I think it's just being honest with yourself.

Caroline [00:10:40] And I think too even, I've had one of my best collaborative experiences has come after having an initial conversation and being proactive and saying, what are your strengths and weaknesses? Where do you, you know, sometimes slip up or where do I sort of excel or where do you excel? I think that having that in the beginning made the experience just so much smoother. And we were able to to work to each other's strengths and weaknesses rather than figuring that out along the way and then running into problems and then fixing it and then moving forward. It was just much easier to just do in the beginning.

Carolina [00:11:15] I think kind of going back to that a little bit like that, finding that balance is so important and going back to, you know, being equals and finding each other's strengths and

differences. You know what makes us different as human beings, as people with with souls is, is we are creatures of connectedness. You know, we we we want to be with other people. And so back to that ego thing. You know, if we walk into something like, oh, my gosh, I can do this better. Oh, my gosh, this person might be a slacker. They might not, you know, I could just do this by myself. Well, yeah. But where does that growth happen? Where does that personal growth happen? You need to really have those conversations, like you said, about, you know, here's my strengths. Here's your strengths and learn from each other. Like, you know, if this isn't my strength, how can this be a learning moment for me or how can I learn to rely on other people? Because, you know, where would we get as a human race if we didn't have if we didn't have other people to work with and to kind of learn from each other and grow? Isn't that that's kind of what collaboration is, you know, we could do that. But then there's also a step moving forward, like, how can I go deeper with this?

Delaney [00:12:18] I think a lot of people have had that experience where they try and do something on their own. And I know I've had that experience. And then working with someone, you know, we see that common theme of you're able to push a little bit further, you're able to be open to new ideas and you're able to keep moving forward in a different way than maybe you would have originally intended. It expands things.

Caroline [00:12:38] I'd be interested to hear about how you both practice collaboration in your own lives and how much of a factor collaboration plays into your current job working in CSSA. And if you've collaborated together, that would be interesting to talk about.

Carolina [00:12:52] Well, we have quite a team in CSSA!

Blake [00:12:53] Yes.

Carolina [00:12:54] Let me tell you that!

Blake [00:12:56] Thinking about all the collaboration we do has really manifested itself because of the pandemic. We all had to go home and had to work by ourselves and everything and everything became a lot more challenging. And we collaborate across all of Cleveland with so many different community partners. We try to bring in so many other community leaders to John Carroll to different organizations that we have. And the pandemic really made that difficult. But I think now we also see how important it is to achieve that social change and that mission of our office and push each other and learn from each other through that collaboration.

Carolina [00:13:34] I think we we are a well oiled machine in the way that, you know, we are very communicative with each other. We're very honest. You know, if someone is having, like this is too much for me to do, someone else immediately steps in, well, how can I help. And you know in going into it with that whole mindset of, you know, how can I do my part, but how can I bring more? How can I be more? How can I do more? How can I help the team more? Or how can I...I keep saying team... But i dont know if that's the right word! But yeah, like that whole mindset of how can I be an asset to this? How can I help everyone grow? Not only myself.

Blake [00:14:11] And I think too when you consider your field of art. And I'm in education. Those are inherently collaborative. Without other people, we wouldn't be able to achieve the movements that you might have in art or the teaching that you'd have an education without that.

Delaney [00:14:27] That also brings me to the point of I know you're talking about, Carolina, how you know, we are collaborative and we want to be in community with people and have those connections. And, you know, we're also talking about we see it in CSSA and you can see it in your work and in the field and different places. Do you feel like collaboration has to happen like everywhere in all aspects of life? You know, spiritually, emotionally in work and all of these things.

Carolina [00:14:55] I think even though we may want it to not be in all aspects, it really should be. Again, to get that whole human experience together, because, you know, whether it's with your faith or whether it's with your work or, you know, your relationships or how you analyze yourself or your family or all aspects, you know, what, are we really getting the full experience if we don't involve others in that part of our life? How can we be open to new perspectives? How can we be shift our perspectives? How can we change our mindsets? How can we learn? And how can we grow without other people being involved in that?

Blake [00:15:29] And I think the Jesuits have taught me, especially with my faith. That's a collaborative relationship. I can do as much to nurture my faith. But if I'm not letting God into my life to collaborate, nurturing my faith, there's nothing there, really. It's only going to be held up with what I can support, not reach its full potential ever.

Carolina [00:15:51] Yeah! And if we want to put this this wall up and shut ourselves off and again saying, oh, I can do this by myself. That's not that's not great. That's not how we learn. That's how we grow. That's not letting letting people in is so important.

Caroline [00:16:05] So then how, you know, talking about collaboration and growing and learning, how do you suppose that this value ties into the mission?

Blake [00:16:17] I mean, when you look at Jesus, the first part of his mission was collaboration. He started by calling on the apostles because he knew that if he was to do the work by himself to try to change the world, no one would follow him. No one would believe him the way unless he had people supporting him and collaborating with him. I think our mission of John Carroll is to create students who eventually become leaders in whatever field they want to be. And if you're a leader who's not letting your team collaborate with you, like Carolina said, you're blocking yourself off to a world of ideas and limiting your potential for whatever change you might have.

Carolina [00:16:58] And overall, just I mean, you know what we say being men and women with and for others, being, you know, men and women with, you know, that's that's so important. You think of classrooms, you know, you wouldn't have a class at a school without others to bounce ideas off each other. Open your eyes to new perspectives, new ways of doing things. You know, maybe I'm not always right. What can I learn? How can we do this you know, in the most effective way. But you know, really having that open mind. And I think, you know, John Carroll is great at that, at opening our minds. And in reflections too like, you know, reflections after service, for example. You know, we have the talk we discuss, you know how service, you know what we learned. What what impact, you know, how is it going to impact you? How is it going to impact, what did everyone get out of it. That's where the learning happens. In those discussions with other people and in the collaboration, seeing what other people bring to the table.

Delaney [00:17:54] Awesome.

Caroline [00:17:54] Well, thank you guys so much for coming on the Podcast today. We really appreciate it. We appreciate all of your insights and ideas and your unique perspectives on collaboration as you two are collaborators in CSSA,.

Blake [00:18:12] Yeah we are all collaborating right now on the podcast!

Caroline [00:18:12] Collaborating in CSSA, collaborating in the field of education and even in the field of art as well. So we appreciate it. Thanks, guys, so much.

Carolina [00:18:16] Thanks!

Blake [00:18:16] Thanks for having us.

Delaney [00:18:21] Thank you for gathering with us here on Living the Mission.

Caroline [00:18:24] We hope that you continue to journey with us as we learn how to be socially responsible members of our community.

Delaney [00:18:30] In the meantime, connect with CSSA on all your favorite platforms:

Caroline [00:18:33] Instagram.

Delaney [00:18:34] Twitter.

Caroline [00:18:35] Facebook.

Both [00:18:35] See you next time!